



"COMFORT WOMEN"
JUSTICE COALITION

5/3/2016

#RememberComfortWomen

California Department of Education
Thomas Adams, Executive Director
Bill Honig, Vice Chair
Instructional Quality Commission
1430 N St., Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Thomas Adams,

The "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition (CWJC) is writing you today to voice our support for the proposed revision in the 10th grader's textbook curriculum to include the history that is euphemistically known as the "Comfort Women." CWJC is a coalition of over a dozen groups made up of human rights workers, lawyers, teachers, and veterans among others, and include organizations from the Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, White, peace, church, labor, and other communities. CWJC has been endorsed by twenty progressive organizations in Japan.

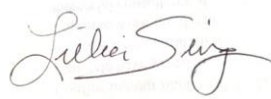
We believe this is an issue of human rights that our children need to be taught. During WWII the Japanese government through its imperial army, sexually enslaved between two to four hundred thousand women in what euphemistically came to be called "comfort stations." There, women from 11 countries in Asia including China and Korea, were forced to endure brutal sexual violence and mass rape. Between 75 - 80% of them died as a result. This was the largest government sponsored sexual trafficking in modern history. In 2007, the US Congress unanimously passed Resolution 121 affirming that history which called for an acknowledgment and apology from the Japanese government and urged educators to teach about it in our schools. (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-resolution/121/text>)

Unfortunately, the government of Japan as well as right wing denialists have been actively trying to refute this history – saying it never happened - both in Japan and the U.S. This dangerous trend cannot be allowed to influence any curriculum in our schools. As we know, history denied is all too often history repeated.

The record of the "Comfort Women" speaking out about their experiences has already changed the world, causing international laws to be passed outlawing sex slavery and rape in war, and putting this issue on the world stage in current conflicts. It is also a history of women speaking truth to power and making real

change for a better world. The truth - widely taught - is the best hope for our children's future.

In October 2015, the SF Board of Education passed a resolution putting the history of the comfort women and its relationship to current sexual and human trafficking into the middle and high school curriculum. We urge you to do the same. And on April 26 2016 the SF schools board also passed a resolution unanimously supporting the State board of education Including the subject of "comfort women" in the curriculum framework.



Lillian Sing



Julie Tang

Co-chairs, "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition (CWJC)